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ANALYSIS OF AN ARTICLE ON HEGEL.

By ANNA C. BRACKETT.

In the North American Review for April, 1868, there appeared an article by J. E. Cabot, entitled "Hegel," which will from its suggestiveness amply repay many perusals. It is here proposed to analyze this article, in so far as such treatment is possible, although, because it is more organic than mechanical in its structure, it will not admit of a formal logical analysis. The main heads will be indicated, and, for convenience, some statements will be reduced to the form of equations. If this paper shall induce a reperusal of the original review, it will answer its purpose. It contains :

- A. An Introduction, vindicating Metaphysics from the charges brought against it.
- B. A Presentation of some of the Principles of Hegel's System of Procedure.
- C. A Reduction of the Results of Inductive Science.
- D. A Consideration of the Law of Causality; and
- E. A Brief Statement of some of the Results of Philosophy.

A.—*Introduction.*

Against the statement of the Saturday Review, that "Metaphysics has been long sinking into merited contempt," our author first hurls the theorem that "Metaphysics is the science of Realities." Not only this, but he goes on to show that all men are metaphysicians, the difference between them in this respect being one of degree alone. These two positions may be otherwise stated thus: (a) Truth is found only in consciousness, and what we do not find there is not Truth at all. (b) All men practically, if not theoretically, admit this. He proves his statements in three ways :

1. By the existence of common names.
2. By the mode of procedure in Induction.
3. By the way in which we accept facts.

1. *The existence of common names.*

(p. 419.) Our minds continually sift out from the mass of impressions produced, the particular and peculiar, retaining the common and general, to which, though we have never felt, or seen, or smelt, or tasted it, we give for name a common noun: and the abstract somewhat so named is recognized

by us a true somewhat. But this common name necessarily implies a comparison of sensations felt by us at different times. It is evident that if each sensation were so individual as to have nothing in common with any other, or if our minds were incapable of comparing, and recognizing the Constant in our sensations, common names would never exist. To-day I have an apple which is large, nearly spherical, soft, smooth, sweet, green, fragrant, with black seeds and white pulp. To-morrow I have one which is small, twice as large if measured one way as if measured the other, hard, rough, sour, red, destitute of odor, with white seeds and red pulp. The two objects differ in almost every particular. And yet the mind compares the two sets of impressions, recognizes a Common, to that Common and Constant applies the common noun "apple," and holds to this abstraction as Truth in the face of the contradictions paraded by all the senses. To verify further the impressions made on our minds, we compare our own sensations with those of others, as far as we can. No two persons are ever cognizant by their senses, of precisely the same object at precisely the same time, any more than two can see the same rainbow; and yet we have common names which we apply to these sensations, as e.g. "sweet." As I can never feel the sensations of another, or he mine, we cannot say that the immediate sensations are the same, and yet we make and accept a common name.

2. *The mode of procedure in Induction.*

(p. 450.) The whole process of Induction consists in "winnowing out the peculiar and independent*—that which has nothing to show for itself but the immediate certainty." It claims to be built on observed phenomena. But a science that were really so built would be no science at all, any more than the accumulated knowledge of phenomena possessed by the North American Indians entitles them to be called scientific. Induction separates the Essential from the Unessential in phenomena, disregards the latter and builds its laws on the former. It is the Universal and Abstract with which it deals. Experience, upon which Induction confessedly rests, "does

* "Independent" seems hardly the word to convey the meaning here.

not proceed by the comparison of sensations, but by the comparison of inferences."

3. *The way in which we accept facts.*

(p. 450.) What is the whole fact to one, is only partial to another. The difference between the child and the philosopher is only the difference in the number of steps the two take in seizing what seems to them to be Truth, the difference in the number of "why's" they ask. The child accepts immediate sensations as Truth, and all facts are to him "stubborn"; i. e. he does not, because he cannot, go behind them. But as he grows towards philosophy, facts before stubborn are no longer so, but yielding. Behind them, however, lie another set which are stubborn to him. And, moreover, he does believe implicitly that these also will yield at last to perseverance, else why does he never give over his efforts?

The distinction above referred to of essential and unessential is further shown. Facts are what we want? Yes; but surely not all facts. For how else comes it that science disregards some and carefully holds to others? The curve of a kitten's tail is as much a fact as the curve of Saturn's orbit. Why does science neglect the one, and busy herself about the other?

Can Positivism tell us what draws the line between essential and unessential facts? Is it not evident that we do actually "assign mental values to all our facts," which values alone we recognize, and that these values are simply the exponent of the force with which facts go out of and beyond themselves—"with which they lead away from themselves"—with which they enter into relations? But these relations are assuredly metaphysical abstractions.

Now this comparing of sensations, this selecting of facts, this assigning of mental values to them, is done through CONSCIOUSNESS (p. 452). Man does it; the brute does not. To the latter, in so far as he is pure brute,* one fact is of just as much importance as another, and each sensation separate and

* This phrase may require some explanation. A dog recognizes the difference between his master's whistle and that of a locomotive. He hears both, but obeys one and disregards the other except in so far as he listens to it. In this he is not pure brute, for he evidently makes some mental comparison, if the expression may be allowed.

unrelated. If his actions are adapted to the end of his being, they are so only to us, not to him. "Brutes think, but they do not think about thinking, and hence are not individuals, are not free." Consciousness, accordingly, is defined thus: (pp. 452-53) Consciousness is

- a. "The taking together of what belongs together, but occurs separately."
- b. "The knowing together or in common with others." (Hobbes.)
- c. "The individual's discovery that he is not mere individual, but also universal."
- d. "The discovery that one's individuality is not mere fact, but Truth."
- e. "The discovery of the Truth."

"Consciousness is infallible as far as it goes" (p. 453). It is our only criterion of Truth. Error may arise, however, from our carrying it "only to the most general category." Lewes and Mill are here unwillingly forced to testify to the correctness of this conclusion, the former by the admission in the introduction to his *History of Philosophy* that "the verdict of Consciousness is the ultimate test of Truth," and the latter "by his assuming his fundamental truth, Happiness, to be its own sufficient reason and evidence." "The only conclusive test of Truth is seeing it," and what all see is accepted as established science.

The Introduction closes here with the acceptance of the statement that Metaphysics—Philosophy—is Idealism. But when one has been forced to admit that all are idealists, the conclusion is not far off that all men, not excepting the writer of the *Saturday Review* article, are metaphysicians.

It has been already seen that by experience no one really means the sensuous perception. Some definition may elucidate its meaning. Experience is (p. 454):

- a. "The reconciliation of the limits and conditions which surround a fact, to the Truth."
- b. "The rectifying of old impressions by new."
- c. "The thinking over again, and recognizing in them ever wider relations of 'particular facts'—and Consciousness is a thinking of this process."

B.—*Some Principles of Hegel's Procedure.*

(p. 455.) To those who deride metaphysics, Hegel, as the most metaphysical thinker, becomes the most prominent object

of scorn, and it is well known how industriously ridicule has been brought to bear on his reduction of Being and Nought. In common with most German philosophers, he has to bear the odium of trying to evolve Truth from consciousness, his critics, however, failing to inform us from what other well it is to be drawn. But he is especially accused of starting with his own presuppositions, and of then proceeding to startle the understanding into the acceptance of his conclusions by force of a series of brilliant paradoxes. Our author here asserts, p. 456, (1) that least of all men does Hegel make, or even accept, any presuppositions; (2) that the essence of his method consists in leaving the Truth to show itself, or rather in simply firmly grasping and holding the phenomenal world till it shakes itself clear of all unessentials, and the naked Truth stands revealed. This process is indicated in the old tale, which appears in so many different forms, of the knight transformed by magical power, and who was only restored by the friend who seized and—though he became in his grasp red-hot metal, fire, water, and a roaring lion—simply held him fast till he held him at last in his proper shape; so, in spite of the glamour of the senses, Hegel seizes the phenomenal world as it presents itself, and firmly holds it; and through all its transformations he holds it, till it stands stripped of all seemings in its absolute Truth.

Hegel holds that, if this process be pursued, each partial result *through its very unsatisfactoriness* will indicate the Truth which it has not reached. While the understanding flings away the contradictions it encounters as useless rubbish and so leaves its hands empty, or else sits down upon them to mourn over the futility of human reason, Hegel posits them as steps, and mounts by them into a higher realm of Truth. To him, then, failure is success, for it becomes at once transformed into a continually brightening morning-red for philosophy and life.

C.—*Reduction of Inductive Science.*

(p. 457.) Our author adduces here the famous paradox with which Hegel's Logic begins, of the identity of Being and Nought, and shows that this is the result to which Inductive Science itself leads, the very end to which it is directing its

course, and which it has indeed nearly attained. For Mr. Lewes says that the goal of Science is "to grasp the universe as a single fact," and he congratulatorily remarks that "we have already reached the sublime height of regarding all phenomena simply as modifications of each other, being indeed only different *expressions* of equivalent *relations*, different *signs* of the same quantities," a doctrine known as "Correlation of Forces." But how far is this conception from that of Hegel's pure Being! We are fast removing all determinations, and shall soon have nothing but a "Unity effacing all distinctions" for the only Truth. If we prove that all is but a mode of motion, what then is motion? Our definition must be, "Motion is ———," and stop there. We can say what it is not; and how far removed are we then from nought? We have satisfactorily reduced all the phenomenal world to pure Being, and this Being shows itself as universal negation = Nought. Is it not quite as satisfactory to begin with pure Being and Nought, and to arrive at some positive result, as to

"Mount through all the spires of form"

with the inductive philosophers, only to rest at last in Nought?

But Science has not yet reached this. It stands, humbly exultant, before an everlasting dualism, the steps to which I will briefly indicate. In pure light, as Hegel says, we could see no more than in pure darkness. We must have something that is not light, something opaque, in order to see the light itself. Negation, then, is necessary. In fact,

- (1) Only negation gives Reality.
- (2) Negation must be reciprocal.
- (3) But negation = exclusion = relation.
- (4) Reciprocal relation implies identity.
- (5) Identity implies difference.

This persistent dualism (p. 459) we call by various names, e. g. attraction and repulsion, positive and negative, matter and force. Science accepts this dualism as unavoidable, cheerfully shouldering the blame itself. It will use these terms "force and matter," but always with the mental reservation that they are not anything real. That things contra-

dict each other is only because our conceptions are fragmentary. But the statement disproves itself. "How did we find out that any contradiction existed?" Certainly not from our simple apprehension; and if we see our limits, we must "mentally see beyond them." Accept the statement as valid and all knowledge is destroyed by it, the proximate as well as that drawn from inference. (This point is spoken of more at length farther on—p. 467.) The reason why the finite world, with which Inductive Science assumes to deal, is so contradictory, so discouragingly inexplicable, is that she insists upon treating it as if it were infinite, having its end in itself; and then is disappointed when it refuses to be so considered, and when it insists on asserting its partial and incomplete nature. When we know that the truth is not in the Finite, we shall seek for it there no longer, and therefore shall not be disheartened at not finding it there. But we have only to remember the conclusion in A (2) to see that Science practically concerns herself with the class alone, not with the individual; and that, consequently, all her mourning over the "painful kingdom of Time and Space" is not from the heart.

(Some pages of the review are here reduced to bare statements simply, to give the results of Inductive Philosophy since Kant:)

- (1) We know only phenomena, not things in themselves =
= Truth is the product of reflection, not of direct intuition.
- (2) Phenomena = individual things, are the only reality.
∴ Truth and reality can never coincide.

This necessary disconnectedness of Truth and Fact = Law of Causation.

Law of Causation = Every phenomenon has some phenomenal cause.
= Things do not happen all at once.

Law of Causation shows itself only in the invariable *order* of phenomena.

Invariableness of order = only that the abstractness of our conceptions grasps the common, rejecting the individual.

This abstractness transfigured = "Necessity of natural laws."

This necessity = The laws ignore specialization, declaring all to be the same.

∴ The actual thing = the individual is left to a remote and unknown cause.

But remote and unknown cause = accident.

∴ Necessity of natural laws = irresistible accident.

Or—Essence does not relate to individuals;

But Individuals alone exist, &c.

This net result of Inductive Science, the dualism before spoken of, is here stated in its most refined form (p. 466). It is “a dualism of unessential existence and non-existent essence; or rather of an existence which ought to be unessential, but in fact embraces the whole material of knowledge, and an essence which ought not to exist except as a mere abstraction, but is nevertheless the real object of the law.”

Science accepts this result with resignation, and Du Bois Reymond is quoted as saying, that “the goal of Science is not at last to comprehend the ultimate nature of things, but to make comprehensible that it is not to be comprehended.” If this is really the case, one might ask why it would not be just as satisfactory to be resigned at the beginning as at the end; for if one must hang over an infinite abyss by a chain, however long and strong, which hangs on nothing, one might as safely and as comfortably hang by the first link as the last.

But the contradiction which Hegel solves by the doctrine of the “identity of contradictories” exists, as has been before observed, just as truly in the proximate nature of things, which is all that Science has left to herself as an object of study, so that she seems not to have even one link to hang by. We are reminded (p. 467) that in every living organism we see “the ideal conception of the genus identifying itself with matter in a unity which is not sameness,” an identity which is difference. Is not this unity just as incomprehensible as the nature of spirit and matter?

The correlationists have solved for us the phenomena of thought by the following process:

- (1) Every somewhat is either matter or mind.
- (2) These are mutually exclusive.
- (3) ∴ A somewhat, if matter, cannot be mind.
- (4) Phosphorus is matter;
- (5) ∴ Mind is excluded from phosphorus.

- (6) But phenomena of mind arise from phosphorus ;
- (7) ∴ Mind is a mode of matter.

This mode of reasoning may or may not be satisfactory.

The cause of the failure of Science is (p. 470) the assumption that Reality is given in the immediate certainty of direct intuition. But "to bring *any* two facts together is to identify contradictions," and consequently Mr. Mill's "unconditional sequence" is really an identity of contradictions. (For illustration and exposition, see p. 471.) Here too we are reminded that in his very example of the rotation of the earth as the cause of day and night, this rotation is just as much an empirical fact as the succession of day and night, "unless we know why it rotates and why it *must* rotate." It is only stating the same fact in different words, as indeed are all statements of cause and effect, unless there underlie them something more than mere unconditional sequence. This brings us to

D.—*Law of Causality.*

Here the review rises to its culminating point with the question, the answer to which must determine whether any science is possible: "Is there any *a priori* evidence of an essential connection between facts?" i. e. (p. 472) "Do synthetic judgments *a priori* mean anything beyond the simple enumeration of phenomena?"* If they do not, all science is *maya* or delusion. But even the philosophers of Lewes' school practically "accept a necessary connection in the universe, though they find nothing to which it can be applied but the order of phenomena." Our reviewer, however, shows (p. 472) that their acquaintance with the order is just as superficial, and so removes their last standing ground.

On page 473, with regard to the contradiction in the finite world, the author repeats what he said on page 467, it would seem unnecessarily, but that he here takes occasion to speak of the idea which he treated more at length in an article in the "Atlantic" of February, 1864, and which seems to be one of his favorite insights, the doctrine that Nature continually transforms her ends into means for higher ends. I leave the

* In Stirling's "Secret of Hegel," p. 12, is found a clear statement of Hume's argument on this subject, which is referred to on p. 469 of the Review.

reader to follow the words on this and the causal relation (pp. 474-5), and come to the statement of the truth of the Law of Causation, which is really the "identity of opposites." "It is not an outward law but an inward necessity of the thing itself, which is not overruled but spontaneous and self-regulated." In other words, cause and effect must be *comprehended* if we would seize their truth. Cause is not cause unless in union with effect. Alone or independently it is no cause. They exist only in the going over from one to the other, in *comprehension*. In their Becoming, is their Truth.

This self-regulative spontaneity which we find in the causal relation, and in which one determines itself to the other, is, in the individual man, freedom. Are necessity and freedom incompatible? Yes, if necessity means a compelling from without; no, if it is a compelling from within. "The truth of necessity is the necessity of Freedom" says Rosenkranz in his "System der Wissenschaft" (p. 88).

E.—*Some Results of Philosophy.*

"The true Cause," says the reviewer (p. 479), "is the IDEA, the thing as it is in itself," and "to transfigure the actual through identification with its Idea is the end of life." In inanimate nature (1) we do not find this end accomplished. Both form and substance disappear. In the living organism (2) we see the preservation of the form, though the substance is wasted. (Here, page 479, the author recurs again to the thought, always recurrent because universal, of escaping from finiteness by making the limitations means and not ends. When we come to man (3), the individual becomes universal through his consciousness, and here (page 481) the subject of "Rights" and on page 482 that of "Society" are touched, only touched, and a mine of thought indicated for any one who will sink the shaft. But in man *as a spiritual being* (4) "the abstract law and the unessential individuality," the Universal and the Particular, "come together as one truth in the individual who is a law unto himself"; and when his Truth takes the form of universal Truth, or rather when he recognizes universal Truth as *his*, he is free.

"In the conception of a self—a humanity no longer self-seeking because self-finding—Philosophy attains its end, and sees in Spirit the final object of its search, and all deductions

or shortcomings as only means to the accomplishment of the purposes of Spirit." With this grand utterance as one of the results of Hegel's philosophy, our reviewer closes his work.

THE SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE IN MORALS.

By FRANCIS A. HENRY.

Nothing is more noticeable in the ministry of our Lord than the hostile attitude he assumed towards the Jewish Law. His teaching always ignored its precepts, frequently overruled them and put them aside, and sometimes came into direct collision with them, when he would not hesitate to set the Law at defiance and to insist upon his own doctrine, involving though it did the relative falsity of that delivered to Moses by the Most High. In these days of religious tolerance, or indifferentism, it is not easy to sympathise with the horror which the bigoted intensity of the Hebrew nature must have felt at the dangerous doctrines of this Sabbath-breaker and blasphemer of the Law, nor fully to understand the alarm with which the rulers beheld the infection of his influence spread among the lower classes, won by the tenderness he ever showed the outcast and the oppressed. But taking our stand among the Jews of that day, and adopting their cast of feeling, as we must do to read history aright, we cannot be surprised that that fate befel the great Reformer which he so defiantly provoked. For in his whole career he showed no trace of doubtfulness or indecision, no care to guard his statements by qualification, no wish to hold a middle course which might reconcile in some degree his teaching with the teaching of the Law. His conduct rather seems to show a careless indifference to, if not a wanton disregard of, the natural religious feelings of the people. His language, in its abrupt, uncompromising tone, almost seems designed to startle and to shock their most well-settled and sincere convictions, to snatch away the guide of their practical moral life, and to shake them loose from the hold of their ecclesiastical teachers and rulers by uprooting from their hearts the faith, reverence, and submission, which for generations these rulers had